

# LONESTAR NEWS

SPECIAL TROOPS BATTALION, 2BDE

FOB KALSU, IRAQ



March 1, 2006



## *Words from Lone Star 6*

Saba el Khayr, (Good Morning),

Hello to the Lonestar family once again! March has finally arrived, marking our third month of the deployment. The Soldiers continue to do the work at hand, conducting themselves in a disciplined and professional manner. Everyday I am nothing short of amazed by their performance and dedication to the mission.

Despite several intense events in the country, our deployment has continued to be safe and secure in the past couple of weeks. The intensity of our surroundings ebbs and flows constantly, always keeping us on our toes.

We were able to start this month off with several promotions, including ten deserving Soldiers who were promoted to SPC, and two deserving 1LTs to Captain. It is good to promote these Soldiers, and especially important and rewarding in a combat zone. Every Soldier that reaches a new rank here in Iraq knows the importance of being able to fill the roles required of them, and in every way they are truly the leaders we need.

The Bulldogs have continued to have a successful deployment, which is not a surprise at all with their long hard hours and technical expertise. Without this company, the battalion, brigade, and division could not function as well as they do. Relaying voice and data messages throughout our area of operations in order to find, report and engage the enemy is one of the Bulldogs' high visibility tasks. Their support to the maneuver battalions may sometimes go unnoticed, but this is proof of when they are working best.

Alpha Company, our eyes and ears of the battalion, are always up for their ever-so-important tasks. Traveling across the battle space, they do not miss a beat. CPT Carter is projected to head to another position in the upcoming weeks, so the company is busy preparing for his leaving as well as the arrival of a new commander, CPT Prince. CPT Carter has been with the Battalion since its start up and has been an integral part of the team; he and Lisa will be sorely missed. We will keep you updated on the change of command. We welcome Wayne and Andrea Prince to the Lonestar Family. Regardless of all of the changes facing the Stalkers, they remain a steadfast and loyal team that does not falter in their mission.

(Continued on Page 2)



CSM Curtice makes friends with the local children

## *Promotions*

CPT Bowers	CPT Banks
SPC Armstrong	SPC Weigold
SPC Deedon	SPC Wiegmann
SPC Beachley	SPC Esselman
SPC Crowe	SPC Dewaay
SPC Story	SPC Pucillo



STB Soldiers work on essential equipment

March 2006

Headquarters and Headquarters Company continues to provide the best support to the best battalion in the brigade. With several trips to Baghdad to resupply the PX, morale is staying as high as possible. The Hurricanes are always up for a challenge, if it is an escort mission to another base or replacing windshields in up armored vehicles late into the night. A few Soldiers have encountered non-battle injuries, ranging from sprained ankles to the common cold, however, there is nothing a quick trip to the doc can't fix. Truly, all Soldiers are staying as safe and healthy as expected in this home away from home.

The Lonestar MiTT is impressed more and more each day by the strides made by their Iraqi Army colleagues. They are not only working the military training angles, but they are doing terrific work with the local communities, such as visiting orphanages and schools. You can be proud of your Soldiers as they are representing the battalion very well.

Environmental Morale Leave continues, and several of the Soldiers that left in the beginning of February are beginning to show back up with crazy stories and grinning faces. The travel time from FOB Kalsu to their final destinations varies from 3-5 days, not counting any major weather holdups. The Soldiers are truly enjoying their time with their friends and family, and we are planning on getting as many Soldiers as possible on this leave. Other forms of relaxation may come in trips to mini-resorts in Baghdad or Qatar.

The brigade has been informed of several changes facing 4ID in the coming year so I encourage you to write and talk to your Soldiers about the moves and decide what is best for your family. There are many great opportunities on the horizon, but careful thought must be given to these different possible paths.

In other news, our battalion has officially been adopted by the country band, Lonestar. The band initially donated 365 American flags to the unit in order to fly over FOB Kalsu and donate to Soldiers and varying sponsors, as a means of thanks and a job well done. Every week, each company chooses a Soldier of the Week who receives a flag and a certificate for their hard work. The Fan Club President and several people that are closely related to the band have consistently been in contact with our battalion and have taken us as their adopted battalion. We have sent them names of Soldiers and needs and wants, and we are overwhelmed by their generosity and support. They have posted our information, newsletters and ways for others to help on their website, [www.lonestar.mu](http://www.lonestar.mu). We look forward to a continued relationship with the band, who we share our name with, and if you haven't already, go and pick up some of their CDs!!

Thank you once again for all you do, your love and support is tremendous and unanimously appreciated.

Lone Star 6

We were lucky enough to have another contributor to **Private Talk**, so please enjoy:

*Iraq? When? A month after I arrive at my first duty station? You have to be kidding. They weren't, and I am here. When did the reality set in? I said goodbye to family and friends with a smile on my face. No matter how sad they were, I could not force myself to be. I slept from the states to Kuwait, waking only when the flight attendants placed food in front of my face. I was too afraid that I was going to lose my lunch, dinner and breakfast on the C130 to think about where that plane would land. And I was too busy looking out of the back of the helicopter to contemplate the fact that in the next few minutes my new place of residence would be a FOB in Iraq. Though, as I stepped off the back of that chopper and unto the firm desert ground in FOB Kalsu, reality set in. Actually, it knocked me over, or was that the wind from the helicopter? Either way I hope that nobody noticed I spent the first two minutes in Kalsu, on my rear struggling to stand back up.*

*I was not sure what to expect. I knew that the hardest part about being here was being away, so to speak. I do have to admit, the longer we are here, the closer we become and the more it feels like a home. Although, every Soldier will agree the all too familiar saying, "there is no place like home". We may not click our boot heels together or recite it three times over (somehow I think that desert tan boots and an ACU uniform would not work as well as ruby slippers and a cute little dress), but we definitely agree with it. It is near impossible not to get to know the people you work with 12 hours straight, every day. Leaders are becoming like father or mother figures, and junior enlisted bonding like brothers and sisters. Although, there are altercations and problems faced, they are always minor and settled fairly easily; even if people are forced to agree to disagree. Valentines Day came and went with those of us here without our partner envying the ones that were able to spend the holiday with his or her beau. There was a celebration in favor of the holiday at the chow hall, giving everyone a chance to escape the reality of Iraq and enjoy the night in song and dance. I work the night shift, therefore I did not attend, but I heard it was rather pleasant.*

*Some of us work harder than others and the rest of us wish we did. Everyone is equally valuable and needed to accomplish our mission and every Soldier knows the value and necessity of our mission. A wise man once said, "We shall not fail or falter, we shall not weaken or tire... Give us the tools and we shall finish the job." That being said, on behalf of my fellow Soldiers, I would like to thank everyone back home for your support because it is one of the tools needed and we sure as hell could not do it without you. Thanks.*

## HHC Hurricanes

Some HHC, STB Hurricane highlights from the past two weeks include yet more inspections of the detention facility, more combat patrols to Baghdad International Airport, Abu Ghraib Prison, Camps Victory, Charlie, Duke and Liberty as well as superb maintenance support from the "Junkyard Dogs", the support platoon, who is now also responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of 22 MP vehicles belonging to an MP PL HHC is now supporting. Mr. Goodwin and his gang are still in high spirits and as busy as a NASCAR pit crew in the FOB Kalsu Motorpool. SFC Ronald King is doing his best at cutting down on the non-alcoholic beer and trying to get the M-88 up. Some other Junkyard Dawgs notables are SGT Daniel Killion who is becoming the unit's CREW system subject matter expert, as well as SGT Andrew Wilken and SPC Joshua Dickerson have been doing great as recovery assets during combat patrols.

We always try to include some images along with our newsletter submissions, and we wanted to show you some of the great work inside the detention facility. Unfortunately photography within the DHA is forbidden because of all the controversy with the Abu Ghraib incident. But they are doing a fantastic job in the DHA, even though we can't show you the images to prove it.

Two-week leave, as some of you might know, has begun in earnest, with 12-15 HHC Soldiers going on leave in March alone. So far leave has been successful with the return of well-rested Soldiers coming back to us, like PFC Heather Clay who works in the DHA, and SSG McCloud, excited to get back to work on Kalsu! All other systems in place, like the guard tower, dining facility operations and the internet café continue to operate with no problems.

The Headquarters Staff element will see another captain in its ranks when 1LT Walter Bowers gets his CPT's bars effective March 1. And that's all the command needs, is another captain. Great job, CPT Bowers!

A big thanks to all of you over there sending mail. Mail call is a very important and popular event here. Again, thanks for everything you do and all the support you offer us from back home! It really does make a difference out here.

HURRICANE 6



## Words from the Chaplain

Hola Lone Star Family!!!

Last month I was visiting part of Lone Star Family at FOB Charlie at Hillah. I had the opportunity to go with LTC Muraski and others to visit some communities and share with the children. I was observing the children and later on when I was ready to sleep I started to think about these children. It was very interesting because other children from other places of the world that I have been (thank God) came to my mind, and one thought that came was that children are children no matter where they come from. They smile, they play, they jump, they run behind the other...they cry when they fall down no matter where they come from. We, the adults, are the people to show and teach them the difference between things, including the difference between good things and bad things.

We here in Iraq are trying to show a different way but it is not only here that we have to try to show and teach a difference, but also at home and wherever we come from. For that reason it is very important that we keep in mind that children are like sponges they absorb everything and from there they develop their selves. Let us pray to God for wisdom that we all could be the best example to the children here in Iraq and there at home, wherever is home. Amen, Amen, Amen.

*"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." Mark 18: 16-17*

### STB (Rear)

The Special Troops Battalion rear has been tracking, training and maintaining Soldiers and equipment at Fort Hood. In the past two months, Special Troops Battalion rear cadre have assisted in the preparation and training of over 25 new Soldiers to the Battalion.

The Family Readiness Group (FRG) advisors, leaders and other volunteers have a great communication and assistance network. In January the FRG celebrated Valentine's Day early to celebrate with spouses and children by creating special packages for their loved ones in Iraq. The participation was outstanding and we look forward to another celebration as a Battalion. Also, Companies had events to share concerns and lift spirits.

Beginning 2MAR06 at Bronco Youth Center, the Chaplains are coordinating youth gatherings for teenagers of deployed Soldiers. There will be guest speakers and fun events. More dates to follow.

Future events are in the brainstorming process and we hope for families here in the states to participate. In addition, the virtual website is in the process of being activated for those who enjoy corresponding via computer.

LONESTAR!

CPT Audry Townsell

LONESTAR 6R

## Alpha Company Stalkers

Shadow Stalkers continue to do great things, whether it's maintaining our systems and vehicles, or being on the guard tower. Chief Watkins and SSG Glassow are working hard in the maintenance shop and beginning to receive Dell repair certification, which will allow them to work on more laptops. CGS continues to collect for Brigade. Supply is preparing for change of command inventories. SPC Moore just returned to us from being at the guard tower. First Platoon is keeping busy with all of our missions, but don't worry, we have plenty for leisure.

SIGINT Platoon has officially adopted its new name. Here at FOB Kalsu and Camp David, our Soldiers are doing great. SIGINT Platoon continues with mission and additional training as we have a little fun.

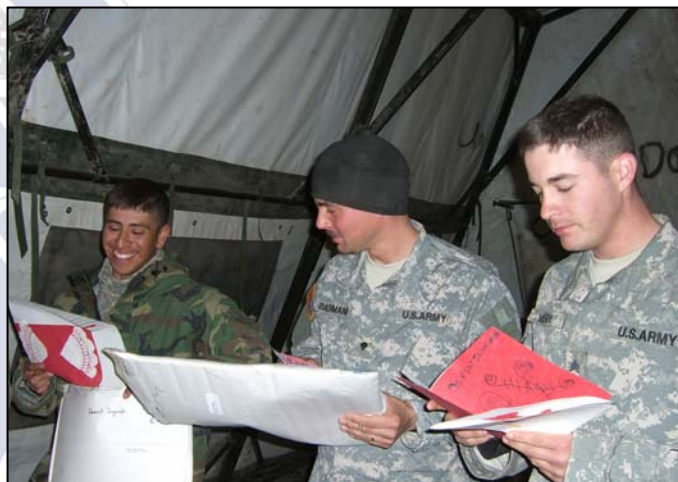
The UAV platoon is up and catching the Bad Guys! Our eyes in the sky have been very effective, and now that we have a rhythm going, we are getting our runway paved and won't be up for a little bit. The platoon is in good spirits, especially PFC Blair, PFC Velilla and SPC Clark as they will be leaving us this month to enjoy EML. The platoon welcomed another pilot this month, PFC Martin. We extend him and his family a warm welcome, and are looking forward to integrating him into the crew. The whole platoon received many fun valentines during the holiday and thanks all parties involved, and keep the packages coming! Mail is getting more reliable, so there is no excuse in our eyes! We thank you all for all the thoughts and prayers, and look forward to another month being over.

SPC Daniel became SGT Daniel. SGT Brown is keeping his team focused on 2-8th Infantry Regiment's Human Intelligence Collection mission as well as giving support for on-the-spot screenings of shady local nationals. SGT Frohberg is an enormous relief to SFC Cross, as she has stepped up and taken the creation of the Battle Update Brief Slide which takes a lot of SFC Cross' time, and will soon be giving the BUB to the entire Second Brigade Combat Team Warhorse. PFC Armstrong, SPC Esponde, SPC Steward and SGT Shepherd have been talking to the Iraqi authorities, such as the police and army, as well as ordinary folk, in order to try to understand the various political and ethnic tensions in and around Iskandariyah. This is extremely important work as the results of the Iraqi elections come clear, there may be a power struggle among the various tribal, ethnic, religious and regional factions.

The FOX Platoon is hard at work as usual. Our contractor, Mr. Freeman, has arrived so we have been working with him to ensure the vehicles are in top shape for upcoming missions. We have also been busy outfitting our M1114's with the latest and greatest additions. SFC Lazaro likes to think he is Jesse James from *Monster Garage*. The add-ons are not just for show though; the sirens, especially, help missions run smoother. The missions are still sporadic, about two to three times a week. PFC McDaniels also left for leave a few days ago, and will be in the states soon, to surprise her two children.

Again the company is doing well and the weather has been dry recently, which has helped clear the mud. The temperature has started picking up, just a pleasant reminder that those 150 degree days are right around the corner. We should really look into getting some misters...hint, hint!

Sending our love to family and friends,  
Stalkers Lead the Way



UAV platoon enjoys cards and letters from home



SGT McDonald and SPC Saliba prepping for a patrol

### ***Bravo Company Bulldogs***

Hello from Iraq. The weather is definitely getting warmer with temperatures in the upper 70's and lower 80's. I hear that it has been unseasonably warm, and hope that that is not a sign that we are going to have an extremely hot summer.

We had two Soldiers promoted from Private First Class to Specialist on the 1st, they are SPC Esselman and SPC Wiegmann. The company Executive Officer, First Lieutenant Banks was promoted to Captain. We have a few who are due for promotion, but they are on leave so we will catch them when they return.

Soldiers from the first group of leave have begun to trickle back in and appear to be well rested and recharged. Our second group has begun to leave, and at this time it still looks like we will be able to get everyone who wants to take leave a seat.

I am going to continue the spotlight on our communications services with our 25Qs. These Soldiers install, operate and maintain the ground based line-of-sight radio transmission systems that connect our Joint Network Nodes to each other and to the battalion's Command Post Nodes. Although these systems are limited by terrain and distance, some of the computer software that is critical to the brigade for command and control works much better over these faster links. These Soldiers have had to carry heavy 15 meter mast antennas onto building roof tops to get a little extra height for a clear shot on all of our links. They have put in a lot of hard work to get their shots in and are enhancing the quality and capability of the brigade's communication network.

I want to thank all of the families for their support of our Soldiers, the mail and gifts are greatly appreciated and always add a little bit of joy to our days.

**Bulldog 6 out**

### **Fort Hood Helpful Numbers**

Command Financial Specialist: 287-3418  
Battalion Staff Duty: 287-7748  
Army Community Service: 287-3726  
New Parent Support: 287-2286  
Fort Hood Chaplains: 287-CHAP  
Military ONESOURCE: 1-800-342-9647

### **Fort Hood Helpful Dates**

Newcomers Brief (spouses/ parents): 6MAR & 27MAR  
Battalion Bldg move from 10005 to 10003: MAR06



1LT Banks and 1LT Bowers reach the prestigious rank of Captain



PFC Esselman gets promoted to SPC



PFC Wiegmann pins on SPC